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ACTS xxvi. 18.

To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

THE Almighty displays himsilf to rational and intelligent minds, in all his works, both in the natural and moral worlds, and justly claims of them a tribute of love and praise. By the dispensations of his providence and grace he breaks down Satan's kingdom, and some of his closest adherents are arrested, and made willing openly to declare themselves in favor of Jesus Christ.

Among those of the above description, may be reckoned Saul of Tarsus. He once breathed out threatenings and slaughter, against all engaged in the Christian cause, and while he thirsted for their blood, a light from heaven above the brightness of the sun encompassed him, and a divine voice spoke to his conscience and changed his heart.

Nor is this the only instance to be found in the annals of Christianity; but every age since the apostolic has been productive of such instances, though not with miraculous appearances, yet they were the effects of the same divine agency. Perhaps in no age has been more instances of this nature than in the present, nor one which has given higher evidence that God governs the world, and hath the hearts of all men in his hands.

Such instances are testified in what we see at home; in what we hear from abroad; from the wilderness, and those who were sunk in the lowest grade of savage life. These are among the marvellous works of God, and with lustre and splendor do they display his perfections in the view of the intelligent universe.

Saul of Tarsus was raised up and inspired by the power of divine grace, to go among the Gentiles, and to be the first instrument in the hands of God, to begin the conversion of the heathen, with the promise of divine protection. He went, he entered the very seat of Satan's empire, forced his strongest holds, and was victorious through the strength and grace of Jesus Christ. The work was the Lord's, and it still is; and he is now carrying it on, by the instruments of his own choice in different parts of the world; opening the eyes of the people, turning them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Christ Jesus.

I. Let us attend to what the apostle did in the execution of his divine mission among the Gentiles.

Agreeable to our text, the apostle's business was to open their eyes, and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they might receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified. What the apostle did in the execution of his divine mission we learn only from his writings; and from them it appears that he laid before those ignorant Gentiles to whom he was sent, those truths of a divine nature, which it was necessary for them to know and experience, that their sins might be forgiven.

In the execution of his mission, the apostle set before those to whom he was sent, this truth, that there is a holy and just God. That this God spread the heavens, laid the foundations of the earth, and built the world—he said let there be light, and there was light.

That such a God did exist before the world was made, or the hills were brought forth, he taught them from the things before their eyes, "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." And from this evidence, he draws the conclusion that they were inexcusable not to believe, and glorify him as God. The visible heavens and earth, the rain and sunshine, fruitful and propitious seasons, all proclaim intelligent design. And the evidence, that the first cause was intelligent, rises still higher when we contemplate the powers and faculties of the human mind.

If there be a God, nature's voice is, thou shalt worship him, and revelation hath taught the sons of men, what worship and service are acceptable in his sight.

This led the apostle of the Gentiles to open the volume of revelation, and illustrate to their understandings the purposes, perfections, and glory of Jehovah as they appear in the face of Jesus Christ.

From presenting to their view the character of God, as it was taught in revelation, the apostle, in the next place, proceeded to teach them their own true characters. In his description of this he includes total depravity. That all the natural descendants of apostate Adam are totally destitute of holiness in their hearts. That their depravity consisted in

opposition of heart to God's moral character, and the nature of holiness; that mankind, while in their natural state, do not like the truths contained in the word of God, but are displeased with them, and with all holy things. The truth of these observations is confirmed by what he has left on record in his epistles written to the Romans, Corinthians, Ephesians, and others, also, by the doctrine of the atonement.

After this gloomy view of the sinful state in which all the natural descendants of apostate Adam were, the apostle explained the way of life and salvation through the atonement which Christ had made, consistently with the moral character of God and his holy law. This led him to illustrate the character of the Mediator as the Son of God, and Saviour of the world; that thro' him life and immortality were brought to light, and endless life was promised to all who would receive him, and embrace him as their prophet, priest, and king, their hope and portion. He showed them the purity, spirituality, and extent of the divine law, that it required the whole heart, or supreme love to God, and perfect obedience to the divine commands. That the atonement which Jesus had made did not make void the law, but magnified it, and made it honorable; vindicated the character of God, his justice, and every perfection, and had declared his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus.

These interesting truths he recommended to every man's conscience, and with more than human energy, urged his audience to embrace them: "My brethren," saith the apostle, "I came not with the excellency of speech or of wisdom, and my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power; that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

The apostle, in the next place, did not fail to describe in lively colors, that benevolent spirit which was, and still is, and for ever will be the ornament and essence of Christianity. That it not only taught the sons of men to love God supremely, but that the benevolence taught by the author of the Christian religion, required them to love their neighbors as themselves: to regard the prosperity, the peace, happiness and good of others in all respects as they did their own. Let no man seek his own (is the language of inspiration;) but every man another's wealth. It teacheth men to be kindly affectioned one to another, to love without dissimulation; for every man to look not on his own things, but on the things of others; in lowliness of mind, let each esteem others better than themselves. Charity seeketh not her own, charity never faileth.

Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, as the only method of pardon and salvation for their perishing souls, he urged in a most pathetic and solemn manner. Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ was a favorite doctrine

with the apostle; it was a necessary part of the Christian system, and that which insured the resurrection of all Adam's race. This led him to discourse on future rewards and punishments; and to impress upon their minds the important truths which he had taught, he introduced the last solemn scene of judgment, when the vail which hides an awful eternity should be lifted up, when they and all men should appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one might receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

That the sacred truths which he had taught them, or should teach them, might not be forgotten; that they might understand the whole counsel of God, and feel that they were shut up unto the faith; he showed them that they were in the hands of God, and were absolutely dependant on sovereign, distinguishing grace and mercy. That impenitent sinners were so wilfully opposed to God, and the gospel plan of salvation for their perishing souls, that they would never accept the offer of life.—Therefore divine agency was of necessity used, to prevent them from destroying themselves; to change their stubborn hearts, and bring them into that meek, humble, and benevolent spirit which the gospel enjoins. This must be acknowledged right, just, and truly benevolent. This is goodness in its highest exercise; on this principle it is that Jehovah hath mercy on whom he will, that he might accomplish more good in this way, than could be in any other.

II. To notice the fitness and propriety of those means which the apostle used, to accomplish the benevolent purpose proposed in the text.

Those truths, which the apostle laid before their minds, were well calculated to show them the difference between the true God and their heathen gods;—between idolatry and Christianity. The illustrations which the apostles gave in their hearing, of the character of Jehovah, the simplicity and excellence of the Christian religion, would naturally enlighten their understandings, convince their minds of their folly, and gain their assent to the truth. Truth, addressed to the understanding, affords light and knowledge; it is means the best calculated to open the eyes and turn men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, of any which can be named.

When the Gentiles heard the descriptions which the apostle gave of Jehovah's true character, they must be led to consider him preferable to their gods, and that a being of such attributes and perfections was fit to govern the universe; that the religion which he taught was far superior to their idolatrous worship; that it would enlarge and exalt the human mind, and if they would embrace it, would raise them from their low, groveling state, to be kings and priests to God for ever.

It may be observed, also, that those means which the apostle used, were admirably well calculated to accomplish the benevolent purpose mentioned in the text, as they point directly to men's hearts and consciences.—Those truths which the apostle

taught were in the first place addressed to the understandings of his audience; and then pointed to their hearts and consciences, that they might feel what they were, what God is, and what they must become, to enjoy his blissful presence.

When those important and interesting truths of the gospel were illustrated before their eyes, and pressed home upon their consciences, with the apostle's usual, conclusive and forcible manner of reasoning; could they avoid reflecting upon their condition in a moral view? that without an influence from the divine Spirit they should never yield to take their seats at the footstool, and place God on the throne in their affections? The conclusion must be, in their moments of cool reflection, that they were justly in the hands of an holy God, and at his disposal. Are not such means calculated in the best manner to bring sinners to see and feel that they are encompassed on every side by an holy God, and their only hope, is immediately to surrender their whole souls to him, through Jesus Christ? Better means cannot be devised to awaken sinners, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.

Again, the divine blessing and success which have attended the administration of the words of eternal life, show their fitness and propriety. This is a strong evidence that such means were appointed of heaven, therefore were blessed; and they carry their own evidence with them, that they were devised in the highest wisdom to accomplish the purpose mentioned in the text, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them which are sanctified. Has not this been the case in a greater or less degree, in every age since the promulgation of Christianity? Does not the history of the church from its commencement sufficiently justify the observations which have been made? Will not the age in which we live, clearly confirm them? Particularly, when we find the same truth taught from the highest authority. So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

IMPROVEMENT.

1. We may infer that it is the immediate duty of every one, who has heard the gospel, to embrace it. If the offer of life and salvation has been made to us, to Jews, or heathen, and the conditions upon which they are attainable have been clearly explained and illustrated in our hearing, can it be otherwise than reasonable, and true, that all such ought immediately to comply with those conditions? Is it not their reasonable duty to make a surrendry of their whole souls to God through Jesus Christ immediately; and present their bodies living sacrifices, holy, and acceptable? To repent of sin, to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and love God with all their hearts?

A review of our subject naturally shows us the obligations men are under to embrace the gospel plan with the most cordial affection; especially, from this consideration, that the Most High has extended his arm of mercy to rebellious subjects, when there was none to pity, nor any other possible way of escape. Redemption for sinners was pro-

cured, at no less expense than precious blood; in this, was infinite benevolence displayed; a view of which ought to inspire every man with gratitude, and lead all to feel the force of the obligations they are under to become immediately religious.

2. From the light in which this subject hath been considered, and the wonderful events of the present day, may we not conclude there is some resemblance between the present and the apostolic age? From the information given us in our text, men were raised up soon after Christianity had beamed on the world, and sent to preach good tidings of peace and salvation to perishing sinners. Is not this the case at the present day? Those who were raised up in the apostles' days, for this benevolent purpose, were not confined within the limits of Jerusalem nor Judea, but were sent among the Gentiles, to carry them good news from heaven; that good will was proclaimed to mankind through Jesus Christ. Barnabas and Saul appear to have been among the first, who were purposely sent to preach the gospel among the Gentiles. Previously to this there had been a small church formed at Antioch in Syria; and these pious men were members of the same, and by direction of the Holy Ghost, were set apart for this important work. They sailed first to Cyprus, and preached the word of God, at Salamis, then they went to Paphos, to Perga in Pamphilia, from thence to Pisidia. In these places they preached the gospel, but not without much opposition from the Jews who dwelt in those parts. In this manner they proceeded from place to place, from country to country, preaching the word of God with great success, gathering churches and ordaining them Elders in every church. At the appointed time, they returned, and rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles. Is there not an high resemblance of these things, in what has, and does still take place in the present age? Particularly in many parts of Christendom, and in parts on which the light of the gospel had never beamed. Many are sent on missions, not only into new and destitute settlements, but into heathen lands. Turn your eyes northerly, southerly, easterly, and westerly, and what pleasing scenes will unfold to view? God is carrying on his work, not only in America and Europe, but in South Africa, and the East Indies. Are not these tidings that God has opened the door of faith unto the heathen?

But another prominent feature in this resemblance is the opposition which the apostles met, and which is now met from the enemies of religion. Is this any thing more than is to be expected from the human heart, if it be as it is described in the pages of inspiration? Has not this always been the case, and will it not continue while the impenitent heart remains the same? Have not error and infidelity always made rapid progress, notwithstanding the increase of light and knowledge, and the clear manner in which divine truth has been illustrated? Was not this the case in the days of the apostles, when the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles

and made their minds evil affected against the brethren ?

3. When we candidly reflect on the manner in which Christianity has been promulgated among mankind, may we not rest assured, that its author and supporter must be divine, and that all the promises of good to the church, which are found in the record of God, will be accomplished. No other weapons have been used to overcome the opposition made by the depraved heart than light and truth ; and these, attended by the divine efficacy, will eventually prevail and be completely victorious. Many promises of good to the church have been accomplished, and others are now accomplishing, which may be considered as the earnest that those which remain shall be fulfilled.

Has not Jesus come in the flesh, and did not the Jews do unto him as it had been foretold ? Do they not now answer the very description given of them by Moses their leader, and lawgiver under God ? When we cast our eyes upon the heathen world, does not the wilderness begin to blossom, and Ethiopia to stretch out her hands unto God? Behold, Philistia, and Tyre with Ethiopia, this man was born there. Is it not true that the heathen now testify that they are given to the Son for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession ? Is it not evident that he is saying to the north give up, to the south keep not back, bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth ?—That the river Euphrates is drying up, and the way preparing for the kings of the east to come in ? That the time is approaching when the Jews shall have an hearing ear given them, and an understanding heart, and shall be gathered in with the fullness of the Gentiles, and the appearance of this world, in moral things, shall be like a new creation of God ?

From this view of things as they are now directed by infinite wisdom, will not every one be animated with the pleasing prospects of Zion's prosperity, and readily lend his aid by prayer, and giving liberally as God has enabled him, remembering that the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof ; that all having freely received ought freely to give ; for the cause is the Lord's, and the boundless bliss belongs to men. May we not when we look forward to the future prosperity of the church, adopt the language of the prophet, Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

Thoughts on Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6.

NO. II.

" FOR it is impossible for those, who have been once enlightened," &c.

IN the thoughts on this passage, which were published in Vol. V. No. 12. Page 448 of this Magazine, an attempt was made to show, that it must be understood, with reference to real saints.

Setting aside the construction there given, it has been urged, that, when saying, in a subsequent verse, Beloved, we are persuaded better things of you,

and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak, the apostle had reference to being enlightened, tasting the heavenly gift, &c. and was persuaded better things of the Hebrews than these. This seems, however, to have been suggested by the want of more cogent and decisive proof. The better things, of which the apostle was persuaded, most naturally refer to the similitude of the earth, mentioned in the preceding verse, which is said to bring forth briars and thorns, and to be nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned; evidently denoting the character and fearful end of the ungodly. Saint Paul, therefore, was persuaded better things, than the apostasy and final destruction of such as had been savingly enlightened; tho' he took occasion to reason with them from a supposition of their falling away, that he might thence illustrate, and enforce on them, in the most impressive manner, the duty and importance of going on unto perfection.—But the contested passage having reference to a peculiar description of persons, who had never known the grace of God, in truth, he must be considered, as laboring at nothing higher, than to guard *such persons* against falling away, from those graceless and unholy attainments, which were not the smallest approach towards saving religion; attainments, which, if rested in, would as surely leave them to perish, as if they had already committed the sin unto death. But can it be imagined, that the apostle should have so soon, and so far departed from the proposition, with which he began the chapter, viz. to go on unto perfection, as to have gone, first of all to prove, that, if men who had made great progress in unholy attainments, should commit the unpardonable sin, they must inevitably perish?

For invalidating the argument in the preceding number, it may be said, the apostle's reasoning seems to imply, that those who had been once enlightened, &c. might fall away; that, therefore, they were not real saints; and that he would, otherwise, have reasoned to no purpose. The conclusiveness of all this depends, however, on its being absurd, and suited to answer no valuable purpose, to have deduced a consequence, from a supposition of what could not consist with the faithfulness of God, and the stability of his gracious covenant with believers. As the alleged impropriety of reasoning in this sort, and its not being readily seen, that any practical use can be made of it, are the main difficulties attending the construction here given, a solution of these difficulties will now be attempted.

Of the impropriety of reasoning in this way, we are not at liberty to judge, from any feelings, or prepossessions of our own, nor from any arguments which are not furnished by an appeal to the word of God. If it appear, on a fair examination, that the Spirit of inspiration has had recourse to the same mode of reasoning with mankind on this, or on other important subjects, the objection, so far as respects propriety, will be sufficiently obviated. We shall begin with what is said, Ezekiel xviii. 24. But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth

iniquity, and doth according to all the abominations, that the wicked man doth, shall he live? All the righteousness that he hath done, shall not be remembered: in the trespass that he hath trespassed, and in the sin which he hath sinned, in them shall he die. In this book of prophecy are two other passages, which are parallel with that now quoted: i. 20, and xxxiii. 13. To the present purpose it seems necessary to show, that, by the *righteous*, in these passages, we must understand real saints; and by their *righteousness*, that holiness of heart and life, which distinguish them from the rest of mankind. The righteous and wicked, in each of the chapters referred to, are accordingly contrasted, as men of opposite characters, in the sight of God; the former, as having a divine promise of eternal life; and the latter, as threatened with that death which is the wages of sin. It is, therefore, written, verse 20, The soul that sinneth, it shall die: but verse 21, If the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die. This turning from all his sins, and keeping all God's statutes, which have his promise of life, are explained to mean, not a mere outward reformation, which might be connected with temporal blessings, but that repentance, out of a renewed heart, which is said in the gospel to be unto life. Hence saith the Holy One, verse 31, *Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed, and make you a new heart and a new spirit, for why will ye die?* It is presumed none will doubt, whether this intends evangelical and saving repentance. On this, and on nothing short of it, is it promised, that men *shall surely live*. The righteous, therefore, to whom this promise is exclucively made, are doubtless subjects of the repentance, which must here be understood. They alone have cast away from them all their transgressions, and turned unto God, in exercise of a new heart, and a new spirit. The promise of living is made on no inferior conditions. Hence it is said in the immediate view of this direction, *Turn ye, for why will ye die?* But still, it is declared, that, *If the righteous turn away from his righteousness, and commit iniquity*, which are of similar import to falling away, after having once been renewed unto repentance, *all his righteousness which he hath done, shall not be remembered;—he shall surely die*. Here then is an example, which is an exact parallel, in point of sentiment and reasoning, with that which has been considered, from the epistle to the Hebrews. Tho' what is here said of the righteous if he shall turn away from his righteousness, is not expressed in precisely the same terms, it is conceived, that it admits the same construction, with what is said of apostates from the Christian faith, viz. that they cannot be renewed again unto repentance. *He shall surely die, he shall not live*. In point of propriety, therefore, there can be no objection to the apostle's having reasoned from a case, which shall never be realized in fact. This is proved, by an appeal to the things which are taught by the Holy Spirit. Other examples may be adduced from the

scriptures of truth, to the same purpose.

When Paul, and those embarked with him, were shipwrecked in their voyage to Rome, and had suffered almost every thing but death, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him, saying, Fear not, Paul, for thou must be brought before Cesar, and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, said he, Sirs, be of good cheer, for I believe it shall be even as it was told me. But ver. 30, As the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let down the boat into the sea, Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, *Except these abide in the ship ye cannot be saved*. It was, however, as impossible, that any of them should be lost, as that God should be unfaithful to his promise by the angel. Still, the apostle reasoned with them, from a supposition of what he had just assured them, should not happen. This he did, for evincing the importance of such means and precautions, as were essential to their preservation. This, as to the manner of reasoning, is the same which was used for showing, that the saints, in order to being saved, must continue stedfast in the faith. The centurion did not charge Paul with reasoning absurdly, when alleging the necessity and importance of means, from their connection with the end, nor even for assuring them, that, if these were disregarded, the end would be lost. And shall absurdity be plead against the same apostle, when urging the duty of going on unto perfection, as the necessary means of being saved, and that, by alleging the certain and awful consequence of falling away?

Such reasoning could have been no more improper, in any view of it, than his saying, to the Galatians, If we, (the apostles of Christ,) or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. When we consider, that the apostles of Jesus not only had his spirit for leading them into all truth, but his promise, that he would always be with them, will any regard him, as suggesting the smallest doubt, whether the faithful, and even inspired ministers of Christ, or an angel from heaven, might one day preach another gospel, subversive of that, which they had already preached? All will answer, No. But if this be not admitted, as proving the probability, nor even possibility, of the event supposed; then its being received, as infallibly certain, that none who have been savingly illuminated, shall fall away, or turn from their righteousness, so as to be finally lost, is no good reason why the apostle should not have found a fit occasion, for laying before them, what the fearful consequence must be, supposing them to fall away. Other examples of like reasoning from supposeable, but impossible events, might be adduced from the scriptures; but these are deemed sufficient.

A few things will now be added, for showing the advantage, and thence, more fully illustrating the propriety of reasoning with men, after this sort. Tho' in God's view of it, and as it respects the certainty of all events, the work of redemption was finished, from the foundation of the

world; still, the final salvation of believers is, *in a sort*, suspended on the condition of their enduring unto the end. None, however, who hold the certainty of their final perseverance, will admit, that such suspension implies any uncertainty, as to their being kept, by the power of God, thro' faith unto salvation. This power is exerted in giving efficacy to such proper means, as are appointed, to promote their perseverance; and to those motives, which are set before them, in the word of God, to this end.—Among these, we find the certain consequence of apostatizing from the faith. This which seems to be one special object, in the passage before us, is by no means inconsistent with the general scope of the scriptures. *If* ye do these things, ye shall never fall. In due time we shall reap, *if* we faint not. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, *except* it abide in the vine; no more can ye, *except* ye abide in me.

The certainty of preservation to Paul and his companions was no greater, than of the means necessary to their being preserved. For showing the necessity and importance of such means, nothing could have been more *pertinent*, or *forcible*, than a view of the consequence, which must attend the neglect of them. It is certain, that men will live their appointed time, supposing it to be a given number of years. Still it is as certain, such appointment notwithstanding, that no man can live a single year, if he neither eat, drink, nor sleep. Its being a conceded point, therefore, that none will die, till the time appointed, is no reason for not urging the importance of the requisite means of preservation, by alleging the fatal consequence of neglecting them. Men are often stimulated to pursue the measures necessary, to sustaining life, by a conviction, that the neglect of them must be inevitable death. The curse denounced against any one, who should preach another gospel, though the case supposed were an impossible one, was not only a mode of reasoning, which is warranted by the scriptures, and approved by common sense; but was highly pertinent and useful. Perhaps nothing could have better expressed the infinite value of the gospel, in its native purity, nor any thing have more fully realized to the Galatians the importance of adhering to it, inflexibly, and at all hazards. The assurance, that all true believers will persevere unto final salvation, and the implied assurance, that none of them will fall away, are essentially the same; they stand upon the same ground. But will any urge, from this assurance, that there is no occasion for employing means, or for setting motives before men, to promote their perseverance, and to quicken them in the Christian race? Will any, on this ground, urge the inexpediency of setting before them the glorious prize of their high calling, which is sure to all who obtain the victory? They will not. But they might urge these, with as much good reason, as object to the motive, which is deduced for this purpose, from their supposed apostasy. This is peculiarly fitted to realize, both the *duty* and *importance*, of not falling away; for in the event of this, they not only cannot be renewed again unto repentance, so as to

be saved; but will crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. However, as real saints regard, not merely the salvation of their own souls, but the glory of their Redeemer, and the *latter* more than the *former*, both considerations must be immensely interesting and impressive. No motives could operate with greater effect, for quickening believers, in the race set before them, and for strengthening their confidence in Him, *who is able to keep them from falling, and to present them, faultless, before the presence of his glory, with exceeding and everlasting joy.*

Those who hold that real saints may apostatize, or as their phrase is, *fall from grace*, after being *once* renewed unto repentance, will probably consider the foregoing construction, as agreeable, in part, to their sentiments, and as yielding them some measure of support. The consequence, however, they must admit, with great reluctance, viz. the *impossibility* of renewing them again unto repentance. It is hence proved, as fully as the word of God can prove it, that if believers fall away, so as to lose the divine image and favor, they must inevitably perish. The strong and emphatical term *impossible* is used, to fix the awful certainty, that the state of such must be absolutely hopeless!

But to denote the stability of God's gracious covenant with believers, together with the consolation and hope, which they derive from it, the apostle says, from the 16th to the 20th verse of the context, For men verily swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise, the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it, by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold on the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the vail, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus. The hope here spoken of, which is founded on the two immutable things, the oath and faithfulness of God, is that hope of eternal life, which is enjoyed exclusively by true believers. Which hope *we* have, says the apostle, addressing the Hebrew saints. What is here said of it shows plainly, that it is an infallible hope;—that it shall never lose its hold, within the vail, nor leave the subjects of it, to disappointment and wo.

By the view here taken of the subject, the following inquiries are suggested. First, How is the Christian hope, an anchor of the soul, *both sure and stedfast*, if believers may fall away, and having once fallen, must inevitably perish? This difficulty must remain, to be disposed of, by those who deny, that all true believers are kept, by the power of God, through faith unto salvation. Again, if the saints may fall away, and having once fallen, it is impossible to renew them *again* unto repentance, so that they must surely die, where is the strength of that consolation, which is derived from the oath and faithfulness of God, who cannot lie, as the unfailing support of their hope? One would naturally conclude, that,

instead of strong consolation, and *stedfast* hope, they must be extremely disconsolate; knowing that they were every moment liable to fall away, and that, in the event of falling, they should not only crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, but must perish without remedy.

TROPHIMUS.

Thoughts on Proverbs xvii. 16.

IN the scriptures of truth wicked men are stiled fools. In the book of Proverbs, *fool* is the usual character of the sinner. Is not this a just character? Will any call it in question? Certainly the highest folly is justly charged upon every wilful, impenitent sinner. But, a price is in the hands of such fools, to get wisdom. By a price here is meant an opportunity and special advantages to get wisdom—to become savingly wise. A price here means much the same that a talent imports in the gospel. By wisdom we are doubtless to understand true piety; agreeably to Psalm xc. 12, "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." The folly of the fool appears, in that he has no heart to the price in his hand to get wisdom. He neglects the great salvation; despises the things of his peace. He *has no heart*, i. e. no will to improve his advantages. More may be intended than is here expressed, even that he is totally opposed to God, and the methods of his grace.

Wherefore then is it that God will bestow advantages upon men, and continue a rich price in their hands, to get saving wisdom, when they do not and will not improve it? An answer to this inquiry will be my principal subject.

1. God doth this that he may make a display of his goodness, even to those who despise it. God delights in making a general display of his goodness; and he doth this many ways, both in the gifts of nature and providence. And by his common and general goodness, he enforces such a spirit and practice on us. He would have us imitate him in his extensive goodness, Matt. v. 44, 45. But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them who curse you, and pray for them who despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. And as God displays his common goodness by sending outward blessings to the children of men; so he doth in bestowing spiritual advantages on foolish man, to teach him wisdom. How much is the goodness of God manifested in bestowing means of knowledge and grace on those who, he foresees, will abuse and misimprove them? He will be good, though man will be bad: He will be kind, though man will be unthankful and unfruitful. This may be a reason why there is a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom.

2. Another reason why the means of grace are granted and continued where there is no heart to improve them, may be, that those may be benefited, who do in some measure improve them. Were there none who improved

them, perhaps they would have been taken from the world before this; but for the elect's sake they are continued. This is the state of this world; the tares and wheat must grow together; and as it is in the field of the husbandman, the tares will have the same seasons, rains and sunshine as the wheat; and they must grow together till the harvest, and be encompassed with the same common hedge; were it not for the wheat they would be trodden down. So, in this case, because saints and sinners live together, such as have no hearts to improve the means of grace, must have them in common with others, lest the servants of God should be injured. Severity to sinners might be of real disadvantage to the faithful and excellent in the earth. See this stated in the parable, Matt. xiii. 29, &c. But he said nay, lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up the wheat also with them—let both grow together till the harvest, and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn. As if the great Husbandman had said to his servants, beware what ye do, lest the wheat be hurt—I would rather lengthen out my patience a little longer, and let the sun shine upon the evil and unthankful, than that there should the least disadvantage accrue to my friends. But,

3. Sometimes God continues a price in the hands of such fools, as have no heart to it, in expectation that, at length, they will improve it, so as to get wisdom. Should God abandon all men to ruin upon their first refusal of the offer made them, how few would there be saved? But though men refuse the first offer, it may be they will not refuse for ever: but they may be induced most gladly to comply with articles of peace. And God knows this will be the case with some. By God's patience being lengthened out, how many fools have been won and made wise? Satan's kingdom has been destroyed in the heart, and that of Christ erected on its ruins.—All are not called in at the same hour of the day: some at the sixth, some at the ninth, &c. God will not fail to gather in all his elect, though he wait long. Christ will be sure to bring home all that the Father hath given him, though his patience be lengthened out to long suffering. This is abundantly evident from scripture declarations.

4. God is pleased to grant spiritual advantages to those who do not, and will not, improve them, to glorify his justice in their condemnation. God's justice will be glorified in all those who shall fall under the curses of his law, whether they have been treated with or not about the common salvation. But how glorious will it appear, when men fall into its hands, after a long offer of peace, a day of grace, and much divine patience? How glorious will it be rendered, when in the presence of angels and men it will appear, that they had line upon line, and precept upon precept; had a valuable price in their hands, and were solicited to improve it, but had no heart to it, and turned a deaf ear to all the calls of mercy, obstinately refused compliance, and rejected the counsel of God

against themselves? Jesus wept over Jerusalem, because they had the things of their peace offered them, and they would not comply, but persisted in rejecting, Luke xix. 41, 42. In a word, as all the means which are used with sinners to reclaim them, will aggravate their damnation, if they finally prove ineffectual; so in the end they will advance the glory of divine justice. Every Sabbath, every sermon, every praying opportunity, every motion of the good Spirit, and every awakening providence, will all advance the glory of God's justice in the condemnation of the sinner, who had no heart to improve the price in his hand to get wisdom.

These may be some of the reasons why God puts a price into the hand of a fool to get wisdom.

May we not hence infer, 1st. From men's being continued under special advantages for heaven it does not follow, that they are really profited by them.—There are various false balances in which some men weigh themselves and their state: some may imagine they have the special favor of God, in that they enjoy a course of outward prosperity; but this is false reasoning. The rich man spoken of in the gospel had great prosperity; but when he died, in hell he lift up his eyes.

Some may be ready to conclude in their own favor, because they enjoy great and special spiritual advantages; so had the Jews of old; but they were broken off through unbelief.—They cried, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord; and in that they trusted; but their refuge proved but a refuge of lies. Capernaum was elevated to heaven in privileges, but thrust down to hell for abuse of them. If persons are exalted to heaven in point of privileges they cannot safely conclude in their own favor barely on this account; if they have no better plea than this, they may not expect any part or lot in that matter. The most wicked and abandoned in the whole gospel world may thus make out as good a plea as they. Hence, 2d. We infer the folly of men not to have wisdom and resolution to improve their spiritual advantages. Most men are wiser for this world than the next; If they have a price in their hands to get worldly good things, they will not let it slip for want of a little pains; but when called to the service of God and their souls, the wheels drag heavily—slight excuses will turn them by—small difficulties will divert and hinder them. Their hearts are not set upon these things, though their own immortal souls are at stake. The great design of God in granting these advantages is, that they should be improved. How many are there in the world, who would rejoice at such a price to get wisdom, as those enjoy who have the gospel in their hands, and hear it statedly dispensed? How would many in infant settlements rejoice might they be favored with such a privilege? But many who have a fulness of such external advantages unfeelingly reject and despise them! Yea, how many are there now in misery who, if they had the world at command, would give it, might they have the golden sceptre of mercy held out to them but for one hour? With

what folly then are those chargeable who enjoy these glad tidings, if they refuse compliance now? for shortly, persisting in their present temper, their state will be hopeless. Hence, 3d. We infer that those whom we have been describing, are under a sore judgment. Of all the judgments which light on men in this world, those which are spiritual are the most awful, and to be deprecated. These strike at the root of all good and blessedness; especially, judicial hardness.

How sore a judgment must it be considered, to have means, advantages and talents, and yet no heart to improve them? And with how many is this the case? And numbers we have reason to fear are thus highly favored, who never will improve the price in their hand to any good purpose; their heart is fully set in them to do evil. How awful and great must be human depravity! And how marvellous divine goodness and forbearance, that God should continue a price in the hand of such wretched rebels!!

Israel, it seems, had means used with them, after they were given up to judicial blindness and hardness, Isa. vi. 9, 10. And he said, go and tell this people, hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not; make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed. Hence, 4th. How miserable must those be eventually, who have all their lives had a price in their hands to get wisdom, and yet misimprove it? We are taught that they who know their Lord's will, and do it not, shall be beaten with *many* stripes. All the means and advantages which such have enjoyed will come fresh into their minds. In the world they found no heart to mourn for their sins; but now they will mourn under wrath.—They would not shed a tear for all their abominations of heart and life; but now they must spend an eternity in wailing. Here they have no heart to exert themselves to escape hell; and hereafter there will be an utter impossibility of it. There they must make their abode till they have paid the uttermost farthing of their debt of ten thousand talents to divine justice. Oh, who can dwell in devouring flames, where hope never comes! Let all therefore carefully search their own hearts, and see how they have improved this price in their hands. Have we valued, highly prized, and faithfully improved it? Or is it our unhappy case still, that we have no heart to it? It may be that we have attempted something, but if so, have we not contented ourselves with the bare form of godliness? External performances will never avail to recommend us to God; it is the heart that he looks at and requires; his demand (with which he will not dispense) is, My son give me thy heart. How can we be reconciled to ourselves, to remain without a heart, to those things which are matters of infinite moment and concern? Let all lament it before God, that they have had so little heart to this price. "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things; but if our heart condemn us not,

(being well informed) then have we confidence towards God."

A View of the following Apostolic Benediction.

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all."

2 Cor. xiii. 14.

ONE great and distinguishing excellence of Christianity consists in the peculiar nature of that friendship which it dictates and inspires between Christians. The most obvious distinction by which they are to be known from the rest of mankind, is marked by this tender, kind, and mutual affection.

Hence the Divine Author of Christianity left this parting address with his disciples, viz. "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."*

The love of Christians is, in many respects, different from the friendships of this world and the men of this world. And the holy scriptures abundantly teach that it is produced in them by the renewing and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit.—Hence, to be in the Spirit, and to be led by the Spirit, and walk by the Spirit, are usual expressions of the holy scriptures, to denote the true grace of God, or that the subject is a true disciple of our Lord Jesus Christ. And for any one to become a truly religious man, is expressed in scripture by being born of the Spirit.

Indeed, the Holy Spirit is represented as being the great blessing which Christ purchased for his redeemed people, and which is bestowed on them; and if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, we are assured, he is none of his.†

As the precious and abiding influences of the Holy Spirit are common to all Christians, and are the distinguishing marks of their discipleship; so these are described in the holy scriptures, as their common privilege, by which they are connected with each other, and distinguished from the world, and by which they have sweet communion among themselves.

This communion consists in their joint participation in one and the same good. As all Christians are born of the Spirit, led by it, and walk in it, this constitutes their common character and felicity.

The Holy Spirit being truly divine, and possessing all divine perfections, and dwelling in true Christians as a principle of divine life and action, produceth in them a spiritual taste for holy and divine objects and enjoyments. From this source arise all their love to God and divine things; all their repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ; all their humility, weanedness from the world, and heavenly mindedness; all their reverence to God and good will to men; and, from hence arise all their experimental and practical religion,

* John xiii. 34, 35.

† Rom. viii. 9.

and all the felicity experienced by them, in contemplating the divine perfections, displayed in the works of creation and providence, and still more abundantly in the holy scriptures, in the law and gospel; but above all, in the revelation of the mediatorial system. The contemplation of these divine objects, thus manifested, is an unfailing source of holy enjoyment and Christian consolation, ever satisfying, ever new.

We proceed to observe, that as all holy affections are connected with the love of our neighbor, it hence follows, that Christians are prepared and disposed to rejoice in the good of others. From their own experience of the felicity resulting from the exercise of holy affections, terminating on their proper objects, and from their belief that other Christians possess the same good, they participate in their holy enjoyments, as far as they come into view, even as if they were their own. Hence, the holy enjoyment of each one is much increased by the view and contemplation of the felicity of his fellow Christians, in the enjoyment of the same good with himself.

Again, the truly good man, who enjoys the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, sanctifying his affections, and is also happy in contemplating the felicity of his fellow Christians, in the same enjoyment with himself, feels a distinct satisfaction in contemplating that felicity which he considers them as enjoying in the knowledge of his felicity and of that of each other, resulting from like benevolent perceptions. Thus Christians have abundant participation with each other in the Holy Ghost, that unfailing source of all holy affections and enjoyments. The discerning and attentive reader, will expand the thought here suggested, to all Christians, whom he conceives to exist, at present, whether in this world or the world of Spirits, and to all those whom he contemplates as about to exist in future, in the blessed millennium and throughout all duration, together with all holy creatures of the angelic orders; and he will enjoy the happifying prospect. As these all pass in review, he will partake in the happiness of each individual, and in the reciprocation of that happiness, through all that blessed society of saints and angels.

Let it be further observed, with the deepest reverence, humility and gratitude, that this train of thought presents to our view and explains the great scripture doctrine of the communion of Christians *with* the Father and his Son Jesus Christ, *in* the Holy Ghost. Such sinners as we are would be inexcuseable in the highest degree, in the thought of communion with God, had we not his own word to assure us that, in the mediatorial plan, even this wonder is effected, so that "God, in very deed will condescend to dwell and commune with men on the earth."

Hence, in addition to many scripture passages, of like implication, we have the following words of the holy apostle:— "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with

the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."*

In the light of this, and similar divine declarations, we are led to contemplate the unity of the Godhead in the three divine Ones, which scripture representations lead us to call persons. A triune Deity ; in whom each divine person is equally possessed of " the fulness of God." So that the one living and true God, enjoys infinitely perfect and independent communion, in himself.

The Father and Son have communion *in* the Holy Ghost, *with* each other, and *with* all holy intelligent creatures, in heaven and earth. The Holy Ghost is the infinitely perfect and blessed centre of union and communion to the Father and the Son, with each other, and with all saints and angels.

This leads our thoughts back to the sacred passage with which this dissertation was introduced. It is the apostolic benediction to the Corinthian church, to whom he was writing, in which he commends them to the love of God, the grace of Christ, and the communion of the Holy Ghost. The import of this communion, as to the object of enjoyment, has been already explained. The holy and venerable name of God may be understood as standing in this place, for the triune Deity ; or it may be used to denote the person of the Father, whom we find in holy scripture, represented as acting in the character of God, in the affair of our redemption. And accordingly, the love of God will mean, either the united counsel of divine goodwill to men in the holy trinity, in the mediatorial system ; or it may rather mean the boundless love of the Father, personally viewed, in the gift of his Son for the redemption of sinners.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, in this text, evidently denotes his divine, free, and boundless mercy to sinners, expressed in his sufferings and death for their redemption, or displayed in his whole mediatorial undertaking and work. However viewed, the communion of the Holy Ghost, is the result and issue of the love of God and the grace of Christ, and it involves the whole of that infinite good which comes to the saved from among men, through the mediatorial plan, and shows that, in design and execution, it is the united work of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and that " these three are one," in nature and in all divine attributes, designs and works.

From the preceding view of this subject, we may infer the following truths, viz.

1. Professing Christians have sensible or visible communion with each other ; or those who profess and appear to be Christians have visible fellowship in Christian society, in prayer, and in all the institutions of social religion and worship, especially in the Lord's supper. We speak not of the means by which they are enabled to make this favorable judgment of each other. Admitting that they esteem each other as such, they have visible communion in prayer, the Lord's supper, and other institutions of social religion.— This constitutes what is called *the communion of saints.* This

* 1 John i. 3.

communion respects only those Christians who are united in the truth, and so far as they are united; Christians, however, of different and opposite opinions on some of the less important branches of Christianity, may have both real and visible communion together, in those things in which they are agreed.

Thus it appears that as the real communion of Christians, *in* the one Holy Spirit, implies the existence of that Spirit and their communion *with* the Father and the Son *in* the Holy Ghost, implies the existence of the Father and the Son, or the truth of the great doctrine of the divine Trinity in unity; even so the visible communion of Christians *with* the Father and the Son *in* the Holy Ghost, implies the joint belief of this divine truth. Hence, visible communion of professing Christians, implies a mutual esteem of each other as sound in the faith, so far as is essential to their Christian character. It also follows, that Christians, disagreeing in some things, not destroying their mutual evidence in favor of each other as Christians, may and ought to hold visible communion with each other in those things in which they are agreed. It is equally manifest that all attempts for visible communion beyond the bounds of their agreement are improper, absurd, and vain.

2. The communion of churches, consists in their visible and professed agreement in the faith and order of the gospel; consequently it may and ought to be as extensive as that agreement, and the agreeableness of their respective walk to the rules of the gospel.

They ought to hold visible fellowship in the institutions of social religion in general, in prayer, in especial ordinances, and in mutual assistance, in all cases of need when divine providence may give opportunity and call, to the practice.

3. Ministerial communion, is, in some respects, different from either of these. It, indeed, implies mutual esteem of each other, between the ministers of Christ, as his disciples and followers, and that they are in regular standing in the Christian church; and it furthermore, implies that they are viewed as possessed of the qualifications for the office of the gospel ministry, specified in holy scripture, and are in regular standing as officers in the Christian church.

The communion of gospel ministers consists in mutual advice, encouragement, or warning, as the case requires; assistance in their official duties, and joint ministerial labors, for the order and benefit of the churches, and the advance of the glory of God and the salvation of men, in the promotion of the Christian religion, in connection with the expressions of fellowship which are common to the practice of Christians with each other. In all these cases of communion between private Christians, churches and ministers of the word; it must be carefully remembered that no attempt should be made to extend their visible fellowship beyond the bounds of their agreement in the truth, and their real communion.

CONCLUSION.

We close this dissertation with the following observations.

1. All Christians ought to love as brethren, and hold com-

munion with each other in all branches of social religion in which they are agreed. This observation equally applies to private Christians, to churches, and to ministers of the word; and is the manifest result of the preceding discourse.

Such is the imperfection of the present state of good men in knowledge and piety, that more or less error in the less essential branches of Christianity, is to be expected; and as many circumstances concur to lead them into different errors and mistakes, their conceptions, on these things, will, of course, be different and opposite. They ought, therefore, with great candor and much humility and brotherly love, to receive each other in the spirit of the gospel.

In the primitive age of Christianity, the Jewish and Gentile converts had great disputes on many things respecting the ceremonial institutions of the Mosaic ritual; the former believed them to be obligatory on Christians, and the latter not, and the danger of division on this occasion was not small. The apostle therefore addressed them in the following manner: "Him who is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations; for one believeth that he may eat all things, another who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him who eateth, despise him who eateth not, and let not him who eateth not, judge him who eateth, for God hath received him;"* with much more to the same purpose, inculcating the spirit of peace and mutual condescension. How much for the benefit of Christianity had this spirit of Paul possessed all the leaders and members of the Christian Church!

Let professing Christians learn to "bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

Let none suspect, by what is here observed, that there is a design to favor or encourage that fatal indifference in religion, which teaches that it is no matter what men believe, if their lives are but good. Far from this—there are certain truths of the Christian religion in which all Christians of common capacity and opportunity are, in fact, agreed; and a denial of these, in common circumstances, renders a person's profession of Christianity very suspicious, and destroys the visibility of his Christianity. Therefore, in what has been observed, we have no respect to such, but speak of those only, who are agreed in the essentials of Christianity, and exhibit proper evidence of their love of the truth, as it is in Jesus, though differing in less matters.

I add, what is very obvious, that in many cases, though not in all, Christians are divided from each other, not on the essentials of religion, but on matters of comparatively small moment, and are really better united in things of importance than they themselves imagine.

These things ought not to be. Let those who are united in the belief and love of the truth, as it is in Jesus, be united in the visible expressions of that union, by the communion of saints, and edify one another, and let not visible communion be extended to those who do not apparently believe and love the truth.—These observations apply with

* Rom. xiv. 1, 2, 3.

equal force and propriety to the communion of private Christians, of churches, and of ministers of the word.

2. The subject cannot be dismissed without reminding the reader that it teaches the unrivalled excellence of the Christian religion, generally, but especially in this respect, viz. That it is adapted to form a perfect and happy society, on the basis of mutual, kind affection.

Christianity teaches that true religion consists in the love of God and our neighbor; or, which is the same, in union of heart to the general good; that by being born and led by the Spirit, or by communion in him, good men are inspired with that noble and disinterested affection; of course, they all desire and possess the same good, and the more this is enjoyed by one, is the happiness of others promoted—for the good of one is the good of all, which good is the glory of God and the perfection of his kingdom, as distinguished from every private good. Hence all the members of this holy society are united in one, not only with each other, but with the ever blessed God, agreeably to the prayer of our Lord Jesus Christ. "That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me and I in thee, that they may be one in us."* And the perfection and blessedness of the redeemed church consists in the fellowship of all its members in the Holy Ghost, with each other, and with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.†

Such is the peculiar excellence of the Christian religion, it unites in one all the redeemed; they have one common good with each other, with the holy angels, and with the ever blessed, the triune Deity. How widely distinguished from all other religions among men, and how abundantly evident, that this is divine, as it is excellent in itself, worthy of God, and adapted to the best, the whole interest of men! How precious and glorious is that divine Saviour who has founded this religion in the sufferings of the cross! How glorious is that Holy Spirit in whom the redeemed are united! What love of the Father of mercies, which devised and gave this plan of redemption! Let saints and angels lie for ever low, in adoring praise to the triune Deity, for the love of God, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the communion of the Holy Ghost.

Let perishing sinners of this mortal race on earth, look from their depths of human guilt and misery, and behold the sceptre of mercy extended from heaven, that sinners may touch it and live for ever; and be lost in the fathomless abyss, the height and depth, the length and breadth, of the love of God, which passeth knowledge; and the writer and the reader join with one accord, in the new song to him who loved them and washed them from their sins in his own blood.

* John xvii. 21. † 1 John i. 3.

The Lord's Supper.

A plain, practical explanation of an important passage in Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, chap. xi. 27—32.

"WHEREFORE, whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body

and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world."

SOME words in this passage have an awful sound. And they really contain a solemn caution and warning to professing Christians, against eating the bread and drinking the cup of the Lord, in an irreverent, carnal, and improper manner; and to do it with views, motives, and ends corresponding to the nature and design of the sacred institution. But the passage, rightly viewed, presents to honest hearted Christians, who are sincerely desirous of discharging their duty according to the will of Christ, no real ground of discouragement, or of disheartening and dismaying fear, to deter them from obeying his command in this particular.

The passage has such relation to, and dependence on what the apostle had been relating in the preceding context, that its true meaning and import cannot be readily apprehended, without a summary view of the things contained in several of the foregoing verses.

The church at Corinth, at least some members of it, were unhappily and criminally actuated by a contentious party spirit, which produced divisions among them, as appears by verses 17, 18, 19. This unbecoming, unchristian temper had a pernicious influence on their conduct, in their meetings for religious exercises, and particularly, for attending the sacred ordinance of the Lord's supper; and in connection with other defects produced such irregularities, that their conduct, on these occasions, was not in reality eating the Lord's supper, according to the divine institution, however they might view it. This may be seen by verses 20, 21, 22.

To correct these mistakes—to convince them of their great irregularity and guilt, and to bring them back to right views of the nature and design of the Lord's supper, the apostle repeated what he had received of the Lord by special revelation, and formerly delivered to them, concerning the original institution of this sacred ordinance. He said, "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the *same* night in which he was betrayed, took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come."—Verses 23, 24, 25, 26.

By this account of the original institution of the ordinance they were taught, among other things, that the Lord's supper is not designed for the refreshment of animal nature,

like a common meal at an ordinary feast—that they were to eat of the bread, and drink of the cup, not for the sake of sustaining their natural lives, or feeding and nourishing their bodies, or gratifying their animal appetites; but with a believing, obediential, and fiducial regard to, and dependence on Christ crucified—that they were to eat of the bread, as a divinely appointed memorial or symbol of his crucified body; and to drink of the cup, as a divinely appointed symbol of his blood shed to atone for their sins, and to confirm the new covenant and secure its blessings to all that are Christ's; and that as often as they ate of this bread and drank of this cup, in a manner answerable to the design of the institution, they visibly showed and practically avowed their grateful remembrance of Christ's death, and declared themselves the disciples of that Jesus who was crucified, and their dependence on his death as the procuring cause of forgiveness with God and all spiritual blessings; and that in this way Christ's people were to show forth his death, through all successive periods, till his second coming.

"Wherefore," said the apostle, "whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." That is, such as now stated, being the nature, import and design of the Lord's supper, it is a clear case, that whoever shall eat of this bread, and drink of this cup, which are appointed to represent the body and blood of the Lord, in an ignorant, stupid, inconsiderate, irreverent, contentious, and carnal manner, not distinguishing between the bread and wine in this ordinance, and the provisions of an ordinary supper or feast, and without any of those views and affections, which correspond to the nature and design of the sacred institution, shall be guilty of treating "the sin-bearing body and the atoning blood" of the Lord Jesus Christ with disrespect and contempt.

To prevent such scandalous conduct, and avoid the contracting of such enormous guilt, the apostle gave the following directions, viz. "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup."—The word rendered *examine*, signifies to examine, and also to prove and make evident. And the whole context naturally suggests, that the examination, to which every man, desiring to eat the Lord's supper in a proper manner, as here directed, has for its object, his understanding of the signification and end of the ordinance, and his views, motives, and ends in attending it. Let a man—let every one, who would come in a proper manner to the Lord's table, examine—let him make proof of himself, with respect to his understanding and knowledge of the nature and design of this divine institution, and see, that he understands that the bread and cup are to be considered not as common food, but as divinely appointed memorials or symbols of Christ's body and blood, broken and shed to atone for sin and confirm the new covenant with all its blessings; and that they are to be eaten and drunk with a religious, believing, fiducial respect to Christ crucified, in obedience to his command, with a

grateful remembrance of his atoning death, as a practical exhibition of it and declaration of his own reception of, and subjection to, and trust in him as his Lord and all-sufficient Saviour. Let him also examine and make proof of himself with respect to his temper and spirit, views and motives in this transaction, and see that they be such as answer and correspond to its nature, design, and import—that he hath such a sense of sin, and sorrow for it, and hatred of it, and desire of deliverance from it, as to perceive and feel, and cordially acknowledge his need of Christ's atonement—that he believes and trusts in his death as a complete propitiation for sin, and securing all new covenant blessings to his people—that he desires, in the way of Christ's appointment, to testify and express a grateful remembrance of his sufferings, and his own reception of, and obedience to, and dependence on him as his Lord and Saviour. And so let him eat—having thus examined and made proof of himself, let him, with these suitable views and affections, aims and ends, eat of the bread, and drink of the cup, which represent the body and blood of the Lord.

To enforce a due attention to this direction, and to impress their minds with a sense of the awful consequences of a careless, irreverent, and carnal use of the sacramental bread and cup, the apostle added, "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." That is, he who, without understanding or duly considering the nature, import, and design of this divine institution, eats and drinks with such an uncharitable, dividing, contentious spirit, as some of the Corinthians did, or in a carnal and sensual manner, as though he was eating for the refreshment of the body, and without a religious regard to Christ's body and blood as symbolically represented by the bread and wine—such a one, instead of discharging his duty towards Christ, and deriving any spiritual advantage to himself, contracts such guilt in eating and drinking, as exposes him to the righteous rebukes of the Lord in the way of his chastening judgments, as he doth not discern the Lord's body in the divinely appointed representations of it, or distinguish and make a proper difference between the divinely appointed symbols and memorials of his body and blood, and common food.

The word translated *discerning*, signifies to discern, to separate, to make a difference, to judge between, &c. and the whole context leads us to understand it, in this place, of distinguishing and making a difference. He who eats and drinks in the unworthy manner here intended, doth not discern the Lord's body; that is, he doth not distinguish or make any proper difference between the bread and cup which represent the Lord's body, and the provisions of an ordinary supper or feast; but eats of the bread and drinks of the cup, as he would of the provisions of an entertainment for the refreshment of animal nature. By eating and drinking at the Lord's table, in this unworthy, ignorant, irreverent, and carnal manner, even though he be a true believer in Christ, he eats and drinks judgment to him-

self—not certain eternal damnation, as some honest hearted Christians have feared, to the destroying of their comfort in the discharge of an important duty, or preventing their approach to an ordinance calculated to strengthen their faith, inflame their love, and increase their joy. But by the judgment directly intended in this verse, the apostle, in the following verses, explained himself to mean, such *chastenings* of the Lord, as are opposed to final condemnation, and calculated to prevent it, by operating as means of repentance and amendment.

"For this cause," said he, "many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep."—Such was the judgment which some of them ate and drank to themselves. The apostle added, "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged." That is, if we would uprightly and impartially examine our hearts and conduct, and judge and condemn ourselves for all that is wrong in us, and penitently turn from it, and perform this and other duties, with right views and in a right manner, we should be exempted from those judgments, which God, in righteous displeasure at our sins, brings upon us for our unworthy and criminal temper, and behaviour; and especially, from the condemnation, under which the finally impenitent will fall.

Still further to explain the case of eating and drinking judgment to themselves, and to encourage and excite them to judge, to condemn, and correct what was so grossly amiss in themselves, the apostle subjoined, "But when we are judged we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world." As a father chastens his children when they prove stupid, careless, and disobedient, to bring them to a sense of their sin and duty, and to excite them, with penitential sorrow, to renounce the one and perform the other, in order to prevent their utter ruin, and secure their happiness: so the Lord, when his people neglect their duty, and go astray in the ways of error and wickedness, chastens them with his judgments in this life, to convince and humble and reclaim them, and prevent their continuing in such evil ways, as, if persisted in, would issue in their condemnation at the great day, with the men of the world.

This shows that the judgment, which they who eat and drink unworthily at the Lord's supper, eat and drink to themselves, is different from final condemnation, and may be incurred, in some cases at least, where final condemnation is avoided. Indeed, if they who eat and drink unworthily, with improper views and dispositions, in an ignorant, irreverent, and sensual manner, are not true believers in Christ, and never become true penitents, they will undoubtedly be condemned with the rest of the ungodly, and suffer the wrath of God in the world to come, for their sin in eating and drinking unworthily, as well as in all other particulars. But what I conceive to be evident from the whole passage taken together, is, that eating and drinking unworthily doth not certainly seal or insure final condemnation or eternal misery—that this is not an unpardonable sin, that it may be forgiven, as well as other offen-

ces—that the judgment which such are *here said* to eat and drink to themselves, is a different thing from eternal damnation or future punishment. It primarily signifies the judgment with which God chastens his people, that they may not share in the condemnation of the world. Though it be highly probable that some, who eat and drink thus unworthily, are wholly destitute of true saving faith in Christ, and continue so to the last, and perish in their sins; yet it is a very possible case—a case that hath really happened, that some real though very imperfect Christians, through ignorance and the influence of a carnal temper, may eat and drink unworthily, in the sense intended in the text, and yet being judged, that is, chastened of the Lord, may repent, and escape the condemnation of the ungodly, and be finally saved.

Wherefore, let care be taken, not to put such a strained construction on the wholesome and salutary instructions and warnings of the apostle, as would fill a sincere but diffident Christian with dismaying fear, and terrify him from obeying the commands of Christ, to eat of the bread and drink of the cup of the Lord in remembrance of him, as though in case he failed of doing it in a right and acceptable manner, he would insure his own eternal damnation. And on the other hand, Let all duly consider and be thoroughly sensible of the great evil, and terrible consequences, of attending this sacred ordinance in an ignorant, stupid, careless, irreverent, and carnal manner, without any suitable regard to the crucified Saviour, or making any proper distinction between the divinely appointed memorials of his body and blood, and the provisions of an ordinary entertainment; and guard against bringing such heinous guilt upon their souls. Let them examine and prove themselves with respect to their understanding and sense of the nature, design, and import of this divine institution, and of their conduct in celebrating it; and with respect to their temper, views, and motives in this transaction; and see to it, that they be suitable to the design and import of the ordinance:—and so let them eat of the bread and drink of the cup of the Lord, as divinely instituted symbols of his body and blood in remembrance of him, and of his sufferings and death for the redemption of his people, and in obedience to his command, as a practical declaration that they receive, submit to, and trust in him, as their Lord and Saviour. And let them see to it, that all this be done from the heart, with all those internal exercises of repentance, faith, hope, love, gratitude, praise, and self-dedication, which correspond to the import of such a practical declaration.

God grant, that through the gracious influence of the spirit of truth and holiness, all who name the name of Christ, may *so* eat and drink, to the glory of his name and their own spiritual and everlasting benefit.

PAREPIDEMOS.

An Infidel converted.

AS it is not proper that the real name of the subject of the following account should

be known, we will call him Philander.

His natural endowments were good; and his prospects in life, pleasing. Being but partially instructed in the things of religion; and placing unwarrantable dependence upon reason as a guide; he began to entertain doubts concerning the truth of the scriptures. In them, he found many things which neither cherished his hopes, nor flattered his desires; but spoke to him in the unwelcome language of prohibition. These doubts were strengthened, and increased, and confirmed by native depravity. He easily disbelieved, what he most ardently wished to be false. Hence he became not only a confirmed infidel; but a champion of infidelity. Against religion he hardened his heart; disputed with success; and gained a number of proselytes.

But notwithstanding these flattering and effectual endeavors; his conscience would sometimes reprove, and make him sorely uneasy. Such disturbances however, he considered as the expiring effects of education. By laying aside the Bible, and neglecting public, as well as private worship, he became more easy, and more strong in his infatuation.

The loose opinions, and consequent loose conduct of Philander, were a grief of mind, to his wife; a woman of piety and worth. She often addressed him on the subject; and endeavored in a tender and affectionate manner to win him to the ways of truth and righteousness. But in vain. He ever heard her, indeed, with politeness and attention; but esteemed religion a fable, suited to engage the hearts, and regulate the conduct of women; he even thought it made them mild and amiable; but still, considered it as entirely beneath the regard of men; who are to be of an unmoved, and independent spirit. Thus he now lived free from the restraints of religion; and free from concern. But by his wife prayer was made to God for him without ceasing. There took place at length, a remarkable providence, which could not be viewed with indifference by any mortal, however stupid. This his pious companion pressed upon his mind earnestly, but with kindness. It had taken strong hold of his heart; but he dissembled his feelings, and resolved to throw off his convictions if possible.—In this attempt he strove hard; labored to keep up his accustomed cheerfulness and gaiety; and to his wife, who would now and then mention the surprising event, observed, "My dear, I wish you would never speak of that foolish —— to me again." But notwithstanding his appearance of intrepidity, his conscience was at this very time, speaking to him in the language of terror. He now more than ever, sought earnestly for substantial proof in favor of infidelity; but—he found none. In this racking perplexity of mind, he often said to himself; if the Bible is true—if religion is a reality—— To yield is hard. What would his acquaintance, what especially would his disciples say if he should now submit; after having boasted so much fortitude, and fearlessness of God and death? He therefore exerted himself to quiet his spirit, as the mariners did to bring Jonah to

land; but the more he strove the more was his spirit like the troubled sea when it cannot rest; whose waters cast up mire and dirt. Sleep departed from him. The force of his conviction, and his fearful looking for of judgment, were as a fire shut up in his bones; he was weary with refraining; and he could not forbear. Unable to prevent or any longer to conceal the anguish of his heart; he made it known to his dear partner. She could realize his feelings, and heartily sympathize with him in the distress of his mind. This discovery excited in her heart the mingled emotions of joy, hope, and fear. She rejoiced with trembling. But his torments were not abated. His soul was now thoroughly roused from the dream of infidelity. He saw that deistical notions are groundless; that they are as contrary to sound reason as they are to the scriptures, and that if not forsaken, they will terminate in the sure and everlasting destruction of the soul. His anguish of spirit was exceedingly great. Is there mercy? Is there any hope for a transgressor so great and so abandoned, as I have been? This enquiry he made over and over, with a solicitude that surprised his neighbors, and shocked his companions in infidelity.

But his convictions became more and more pungent; and his distress rose higher and higher; until he was unable to attend to his worldly business; he went mourning from day to day; and was ready to give up himself for lost. In this state of mind, bowed down with grief, he continued about a quarter of a year. When Philander had been thus awfully shown the folly of his ways, and his utter inability to help himself; God was pleased in sovereign mercy to bring him up out of the horrible pit and miry clay; and place his feet, as it is hoped, on a rock; on the sure foundation stone of the gospel. If his change from infidelity to conviction was great; his change from conviction to a hope in Christ was unspeakably greater. In his view the Bible became at once a new book; the gospel scheme of salvation was plain, consistent, and glorious. He wondered exceedingly that any person should ever favor infidelity for a moment. His heart would often enquire, what evidence has deism to boast; what rewards has it to offer, when compared with the gospel?

To those whom he had made infidels he now went, with confidence that he could turn them all to Christianity. But in his reception he was disappointed. They who had listened with so much eagerness to arguments in favor of infidelity, had now no ears to hear; and no heart to receive the reasons which he alleged in behalf of religion.—Seeing this he was grieved at his heart. Here he found by experience that it is easy to kindle a fire; but when the flames have been once enkindled, to extinguish them is a task which very few ever have the success to accomplish. But in his own conduct an entire and universal change was made; he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. He commenced religious duties, and has to this day practised them in his family; walking in

a good measure according to the gospel.

The briefness of these remarks prevents that particularity which in accounts of this kind is indeed desirable; it must also be confessed that the account itself comes far below the reality. But in review of this subject we see,

1. The exceeding greatness of divine mercy. The blaspheming and injurious infidel, who has long provoked God, and been contrary to all men, is not beyond the reach of sovereign grace.

2. Let not the Christian who has an unbelieving companion despair. Though past labors may have been fruitless, yet the human heart is in the hand of God; he turneth it as the rivers of water are turned.

R.

An Explanation of Scriptural Types.

NO. VI.

MELCHISEDEC a type of CHRIST.

OF Melchisedec we have the historical account in very concise terms, Gen. xiv. Amraphel king of Shinar with his associates, having overcome the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah, took Lot prisoner and carried him away with the other captives. Abraham being informed of the calamity of his nephew, divinely directed no doubt, pursued the victorious king with his confederates, defeated them and recovered Lot with the spoil. On his return he was met by Melchisedec, who brought forth bread and wine for his refreshment, and blessed him and his God.—To this the apostle refers, Heb. vii. For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him. Avoiding all questions concerning this very extraordinary man, as foreign from the present design, the scriptures very obviously exhibiting him as an eminent type of Christ, let us consider wherein the typical representation consists.—Does it not consist in the following particulars?

I. His person.

He was without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life. In this did he not peculiarly represent him *whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting?*—The eternity and self-existence of the divine nature of Jesus Christ, who affirms of himself, Prov. viii. 27, When he prepared the heavens I was there—when he established the clouds above, then was I by him, as *one brought up with him*, I was daily his delight—who, respecting the two natures, divine and human, which were united in his person as Mediator, as God, had no mother, and no father as man?

II. In his offices.

1. As king in a twofold respect.

(1.) His name was *Melchisedec*, by interpretation, *king of righteousness*, and his character corresponded with his name. Eminently righteous in his person, he administered justice and judgment on the throne, and promoted truth and righteousness among all his subjects. In this office was he not an illustrious type of that *righteous branch*

which God raised up to the house of David? Who, perfectly righteous in his person, did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth—and by fulfilling all righteousness, becomes *the Lord, the righteousness of his people*, and who of God is made to them, wisdom and *righteousness*. Of whom it was proclaimed, Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment.

(2.) He was king of *Salem*, that is, *king of peace*.

As a peaceful king and supporting a peaceable kingdom, did he not peculiarly typify him whose name should be called, *the everlasting father, the prince of peace*—upon whose appearance in the world it was proclaimed, *Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men?* Who is *our peace* as the great agent of restoring peace between God and men—of slaying the enmity and introducing peace between Jews and Gentiles;—whose benign and peaceful influence tames the ferocious passions of men, so that figuratively, the wolf dwells with the lamb, and the leopard lies down with the kid—who blesseth peace-makers—in whom his people find rest and peace amidst all the tribulations of this present evil world—and to whom he hath bequeathed divine, holy, heavenly peace, for their daily refreshment and everlasting consolation? Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth give I unto you, let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

2. As priest.

As his interview with Abraham appears to have been divinely directed, and the apostle produces him, Heb. vii. for the purpose of exhibiting him as an eminent type of the priesthood of Jesus Christ, let us consider this typical representation of him more minutely.

(1.) He was without descent, had no progenitor, no predecessor in the priesthood—and Christ viewed in his mediatorial, spiritual priesthood, was without father, without mother; and viewed according to the flesh he was of the seed of *David* and the tribe of *Judah*, of which tribe Moses said nothing concerning the priesthood.

(2.) Melchisedec was priest of the most high God. God raised him up, qualified him for the office, installed him in it, and he performed the various services of it according to immediate divine direction. In this did he not eminently typify the priesthood of our divine Redeemer, who was provided and set forth of God, to whom he communicated the spirit without measure, furnishing him with those gifts and graces which perfectly fitted him for the sacerdotal office, consecrated him to the work, by anointing him with his holy oil—prescribed the manner in which he should perform it—who presented the sacrifice which he had appointed, and performed the various services of it, *as the father gave him commandment?*

(3.) In the immutability and perpetuity of his office.

Melchisedec had no successor in office. His was an unchangeable priesthood. In this did he not peculiarly represent the sacerdotal character of him who *is consecrated forevermore*, according to the word of the oath, *The Lord sware and*

will perform it, thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec?

From the transactions between Melchisedec and Abraham, the apostle draws two inferences which are so important and instructive, that it will not be impertinent briefly to suggest them.

1. The dignity and excellence of Christ's person and priesthood. From Melchisedec even Abraham the renowned patriarch, the constituted father of all them that believe, received the blessing; and without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better. To him also Abraham gave tithes as a tribute due to his character and preeminence; consider then how great Melchisedec was; but Melchisedec, great as he was, was only a type, a shadow of Christ. What high and honorable thoughts should we entertain of the substance, of Christ himself, who is exalted far above all heavens and filleth all things? Wherefore, holy brethren, consider the apostle and high priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.

2. He is infinite in ability to save.

Possessing an unchangeable and everlasting priesthood, and officiating efficaciously in it, he is able to save to the uttermost all them that come to God by him, seeing he *ever lives* to make intercession for them.

III. When Abraham was returning from the slaughter of the kings, Melchisedec brought forth bread and wine for the refreshment of the patriarch and his weary troops. May we not understand this bread and wine to represent that royal bounty, that meat indeed, and that wine which he hath mingled, the riches of grace, with which Christ daily refreshes his fainting people, amidst the trials and conflicts of this present evil world—or that divine repast which will satiate their weary souls, when, returning to heaven victorious, yea more than conquerors over all their spiritual enemies, through him who has loved them and died for them, he will give them to eat of the tree of life, the hidden manna, as their honorable reward and everlasting portion?

IV. When Melchisedec met Abraham, he said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth. —And doth not Christ bless his people, with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places? and will he not peculiarly bless them when he will make them kings and priests unto God, that they may live and reign with him for ever and ever?

Extract.

IT was Sunday, as I travelled thro' the county of Orange, that my eye was caught by a cluster of horses tied near a ruinous old wooden house, in the forest not far from the road side. Devotion alone should have stopped me to join in the duties of the congregation; but I confess that curiosity to hear the preacher of such a wilderness, was not the least of my motives. On entering I was struck with his preternatural appearance.—He was a tall and very spare old man; his head which was covered with a white linen cap, his shrivelled hands, and his voice, all shaking under the influence of a palsy, in a few moments ascertained to me that he was perfectly blind. The first

emotions which touched my breast were those of mingled piety and veneration.—It was a day of the administration of the sacrament, and his subject was the passion of our saviour.—As he decended from the pulpit to distribute the mystic symbols, there was a peculiar, a more than human solemnity in his air and manner, which made my blood to run cold and my whole frame to shiver. He then drew a picture of our Saviour—his trial before Pilate—his ascent to Calvary—his Crucifixion, and his death. His enunciation was so deliberate, that his voice trembled on every syllable; and every heart trembled in unison.—His peculiar phrases had that force of description, that the original scene appeared to be at that moment acting before our eyes. We saw the very faces of the Jews—the starting, frightful distortions of malice and rage. We saw the buffet—my soul kindled with a flame of indignation, and my hands were involuntarily and convulsively clenched. But when he came to describe the patience, the forgiving meekness of our Saviour—when he drew to the life, his blessed eyes streaming in tears, turned to heaven—his voice breathing to God a soft and gentle prayer of pardon on his enemies,—"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do"—the voice of the preacher, which had grown fainter and fainter, until his utterance being entirely obstructed by the force of his feelings, he raised his handkerchief to his eyes, and burst into a loud and irresistible flood of grief. The first sentence with which he broke the awful silence, was a quotation from Rousseau: "Socrates died like a philosopher, but Jesus Christ died like a God!!" Never before did I completely understand what Demosthenes meant by laying such a stress on delivery.—You are to remember the pitch of passion and enthusiasm to which the congregation were raised—and then the few minutes of portentous, death like silence, which reigned throughout the house—the preacher removed his white handkerchief from his face--and slowly stretching forth the palsied hand that holds it, begins the sentence—"Socrates died like a philosopher,"—then pausing, raising the other, pressing them both clasped together, with warmth and energy to his breast, lifting his "sightless balls" to heaven, and pouring his whole soul into his tremulous voice—"but Jesus Christ like a God!" The flood which, just before, had rushed in a torrent upon my brains, and in the violence and agony of my feelings, held my whole system in suspense; now ran back into my heart with a sensation which I cannot describe, a kind of shuddering, delicious horror! The paroxysm of blended pity and indignation to which I had been transported, subsided into the deepest self abasement, humility and adoration! I had just been lacerated and dissolved by sympathy for our Saviour as a fellow creature; but now, with fear and trembling, I adored him—"a God!"

Extracts from the Preface to the Christian Observer.

THE Christian Observer has been vehemently accused of having an Antinomian tenden-

cy. We believe that this is the charge, of all others, against which it is most easy to make our defence. To be an Antinomian, in the proper sense of the word, is to derive from the doctrine of the grace of God encouragement to sin. To our readers it seems superfluous to state, that we, on the contrary, have uniformly represented the undeserved mercy of God in Jesus Christ as the grand motive to obedience; affirming that a true faith in the Redeemer necessarily produces love to him who died for us; and that if God hath so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

We have intimated that we are enemies to Antinomianism. This pestilent heresy has many shapes, and we are hostile to it under every form. First, we would resist that Antinomianism which professes, in plain terms, that the law of God is no rule of conduct for the believer, a sentiment, indeed, which we trust is not very common; and we would likewise oppose every doctrine and expression bordering on this sentiment. We would inculcate carefully, zealously, and plainly, that the man, who being justified by faith is freed from the condemnation of the law, is still "under the law to Christ;" and that his faith will be made manifest, both to himself and to the world, by his obedience.

We would also contend against an Antinomianism of another kind, which is somewhat more prevalent. Many persons embrace a system of evangelical doctrine, and even connect with it a certain degree of moral practice; but a practice, at the same time, by no means sufficiently Christian: they bestow only a small proportion of their attention on this important part of their religion. We wish to place before the eyes of such persons the universal excellence of that life to which they should aspire, and to delineate that Christian temper in which, perhaps, they are more particularly apt to fail. We wish to remind them, that when evangelical doctrines are popular among large bodies of men, as they unquestionably are at this period, a growing laxity of practice is very likely to accompany a considerable degree of religious knowledge: and that a man may feel much complacency in the consciousness of the orthodoxy of his faith, even while his life is not superior to that of many whom he condemns as unbelievers. He learns, perhaps, to deplore his sins instead of forsaking them: and to acknowledge the corruption of his nature, instead of heartily resisting it. He, at the same time, confidently repels the charge of Antinomianism which men ignorant of the gospel bring against him; and because he knows that there is nothing lax or licentious in his creed, he does not suspect the latent Antinomianism of his heart. Meanwhile his faith is not productive of good works. It is therefore, that faith which the Scriptures denominate "dead, being alone," and which cannot save him.

But there is an Antinomianism which is still more common, and which calls, perhaps still more loudly, for the attention of The Christian Observer. We now allude to that multitude of persons, who, though little acquainted either with the doctrines or practice of Christianity, nevertheless confidently lay claim to a participation of its eternal rewards,

and assume that they are believers because they do not, with Infidels and Atheists, deny the authenticity of the Scriptures. We may be thought guilty of some inaccuracy in thus applying to the mixed mass of the vain, the thoughtless, the covetous, the ambitious, the dissipated, and the worldly Christians, of the present age, the name of Antinomians. We apprehend, however, that, in truth, there is no impropriety in fixing on them this appellation. Do they not take credit for being Christians, on the ground of an unproductive and merely nominal faith in Christ? Do they not account themselves members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of Heaven, while they manifestly and habitually disobey the precepts of the Gospel, and while some of them are utter strangers, and others are even declared enemies, to that life of purity and holiness which Christianity requires? They, nevertheless, indulge no small degree of hope in a Saviour. Has not Christ, say they, died for us? and are we not as Christians entitled to the benefits of his redemption?

We feel exceeding desirous of exposing this wretched and ruinous delusion; this too common but corrupt species of Christianity; a Christianity, if it deserves the name, which has in it nothing worthy of its author, nothing great or noble, nothing spiritual or holy, nothing raised above the world, nothing, in short, which sanctions its exclusive pretensions to a divine origin, or puts to shame the rival claims of infidelity. We wish to remind these thoughtless, and, we will add, these unbelieving men, whose case we are now contemplating, that it is not enough to admit the general authenticity of the Gospel; that it is not sufficient to have been baptized, to be a member of the Church, and on motives of reputation, to pay some decent regard to morality. Their religion, if it carry them no farther than this, will prove utterly unavailing. A FAITH FRUITFUL IN GOOD WORKS, in works far exceeding, both in kind and degree, what they seem to have any conception of, IS THE ONLY TRUE FAITH OF THE GOSPEL.

A general statement of the sales, profits, &c. of the four first volumes of the Connecticut Evangelical Magazine, and of the six first numbers of the fifth volume.

Whole number printed, Vol. 1.	54.792	single Numbers.		
Vol. 2.	48.000			
Vol. 3.	48.000			
Vol. 4.	36.000			186.792
Sold at 9 pence each - - - - -			149.174	
8 pence - - - - - -			10.348	
Delivered gratis to Subscribers, - - -			9.476	
Delivered to Lincoln & Gleason, the new publishers,			18.010	
Lost, sent to Rev. E. Steele, and allowed in his account,			84	186.792
Whole number printed, vol. 5. the six first numbers,			- -	18.900
Sold at 9 pence, - -		15.014		
8 pence, - - -		878		
Delivered gratis to Subscribers, -		984		
Delivered to Lincoln & Gleason, -		2.024		18.900

Sales of the four first Volumes.

149.174	at 9 pence,	Dol. 18.646 75	
10.348	at 8 pence,	1.149 78	
Amount of sales of the four first Volumes,			D.l. 19.796 53
Expenses, Printing 186.792 at 66 Mills,		Dol. 12.328 27	
Sundry contingent Expenses, Postage, &c.		127 44	

Amount of Expenses, - - -		12.455 71
Profits of four first Vols. exclusive of Magazines on hand,	Dol.	7.340 82
Sales of Vol. 5. the six first Numbers.		
15.014 at 9 Pence, -	Dol. 1.876 75	
878 at 8 Pence, -	97 56	
Amount of sales of the six first Numbers of Vol. 5.	Dol.	1.974 31
Expenses, Printing 18.900 at 66 Mills, - - -		1.247 40
Profits of the 6 first Nos. of Vol. 5. exclusive of Mag. on hand,	Dol.	726 91
Profits of four first Volumes,	Dol. 7.340 82	
Do. fifth Vol.	726 91	
Interest received of Israel Newton,	2 33	
Amount of Profits, exclusive of 20 034 Magazines delivered Lincoln & Gleason,	Dol.	8.070 06
Of this paid by Hudson & Goodwin, the former publishers,	4.687 61	
Due from Subscribers, May 14, 1805, -	1.390 74	
from Hudson & Goodwin, May 14, 1805,	1.992 71	D.8.070 06

The sum of 1.992 dollars and 71 cents mentioned above as due from Hudson & Goodwin, was paid by them, May 31, 1805, to the honorable Messrs. John Treadwell and Jonathan Brace, a Committee appointed by the Trustees of the Missionary Society of Connecticut to receive the same; and by said Committee was paid to the Treasurer of the Society, as appears by the Treasurer's Receipt, as follows:

Hartford, May 31, 1805.

Received from the Honorable John Treadwell and Jonathan Brace, Esquires, the sum of One Thousand, Nine Hundred and Ninety-two Dollars and 71 Cents, for which I am accountable as Treasurer to the Missionary Society, having given a duplicate of this receipt therefor; being avails of the sale of the Connecticut Evangelical Magazine.

A. KINGSBURY.

Donations to the Missionary Society of Connecticut.

May 28.	Erastus Merrill, Winchester, - - -	— 25
31.	John Treadwell and Jonathan Brace, Esqrs. for sale of Magazines, - - -	1992 71
June 5.	A Friend of Missions - - -	5 —
24.	Abigail Chandler, North Woodstock, -	1 —
27.	Rev. Timothy Dwight, avails of copy right of Psalms and Hymns, per Hudson & Goodwin,	100 —
		$.2098 96